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TARZANA TREATMENT CENTERS

Integrated Healthcare

Substance Use • Mental Health • Primary Care • HIV/AIDS

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February 5, 2016

Hilda L. Solis, Chair, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Supervisor, First District
500 West Temple Street, Room 856
Los Angeles, CA 90012

SUBJECT: Support for Los Angeles County Pharmaceuticals and Sharps EPR Ordinance

Dear Board Chair Solis:

On behalf of Tarzana Treatment Centers, Inc., I am writing to express my support for creating a county wide stewardship program for the safe and convenient disposal of unwanted medicines and sharps from households. Almost all of us have leftover or expired medicines in our homes, and many of us also have needles (medical sharps). We need a secure and safe way to dispose of these drugs and needles to protect people and the environment.

I'm particularly concerned about the epidemic of prescription drug abuse I'm observing in the community I serve, and how home medicine cabinets have become the new drug dealers for our kids. Drug abuse is a complex problem, and a secure system for collecting leftover and expired medicines from households is an important part of the solution. I'm also concerned when needles from syringes aren't handled properly, putting families and garbage/recycling workers at risk of dangerous needle sticks and infections.

Sheriff collection sites for medicines or for sharps in the county are appropriate; but they are not convenient, there are not enough of them and they are not easy enough to find. Hospitals, doctors, pharmacies and drug companies should all share in the responsibility to ensure safe management of these products. We also need more public education to not flush or trash and instead use the collection system.

It's time to ensure that all communities in our county have safe and convenient take-back locations for pharmaceuticals and sharps. To me, it just makes sense to have the manufacturers of the medicines and sharps provide a stewardship program for their products, just like they already do in other counties and countries around the world.

I support the L.A. County ordinance and ask the Board of Supervisors to support it as well.

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I welcome the opportunity to discuss this further. Please do not hesitate to contact me via e-mail at asenella@tarzanatc.org or by phone at (818)654-3815 should you have any questions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Albert Senella". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and a long, sweeping underline.

Albert Senella
President, Chief Executive Officer

c: Board of Supervisors